

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 USIE-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SSO-00 SS-15 NSC-10

NSCE-00 DRC-01 EB-11 SCEM-02 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01

ACDA-19 INRE-00 /100 W

----- 031797

O R 071017Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9701

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 7041

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, XF

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE

1. MORNING PRESS COMMENTS EXTENSIVELY ON PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE. MOST REACTION CAREFULLY BALANCED, NOTING ON ONE HAND COMMON US-GOI INTEREST IN NEGOTIATIONS AND ON OTHER US ACCEPTANCE OF LINK BETWEEN ENERGY CRISIS AND ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF MAIN EDITORIALS AND COMMENTARIES.

2. MARGALIT (HAARETZ)--JERUSALEM OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT PRESIDENT'S REMARKS WERE DESIGNED TO GIVE ADMINISTRATION POLICY A MEASURE OF CREDIBILITY IN ARAB EYES, AND HAS AT THIS STAGE SUCCEEDED IN DOING SO. STATEMENT IS MORE "EVEN-HANDED" THAN ANY AMERICAN POSITION OR OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON ISRAELI-ARAB DISPUTE THIS YEAR. THERE WAS NO WORD ABOUT ANY WITHDRAWAL BEING DEMANDED FROM ISRAEL OR ABOUT AN IMPOSED SOLUTION. ON OTHER HAND, THERE WAS NO REJECTION

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OF AN IMPOSED SOLUTION EITHER. STRESS WAS ON NEED TO

NEGOTIATE, SOMETHING WHICH ISRAEL WILLINGLY ACCEPTS.

3. ESHED (DAVAR)--JERUSALEM IS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT US WILL NOT GIVE IN TO OIL BLACKMAIL, AND NO SO PLEASED TO HEAR PRESIDENT HIMSELF MENTION NEXUS BETWEEN ENERGY CRISIS AND ISRAELI-ARAB DISPUTE (SO FAR, ONLY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO HAD DONE SO); HOWEVER, IT IS NOTED THAT PRESIDENT POINTED OUT, RIGHTLY, THAT IT IS ARABS WHO CONNECT TWO THINGS, SO THAT THIS CHANGE OF CONCEPTION IS NOT DUE TO HIS INITIATIVE, BUT HAS BEEN FORCED ON HIM BY FEISAL'S CHANGE OF COURSE AND DOES NOT INVOLVE ABANDONING PRINCIPLES OF US POLICY ON ISRAEL AND ON SOLUTION OF ISRAEL-ARAB DISPUTE.

4. IN ANOTHER ARTICLE, ESHED STATES THAT NIXON STATEMENT SHOULD NOT WORRY GOI AT THIS STAGE, SINCE IT IS ALSO INTERESTED IN NEGOTIATIONS AND ADVANCING PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST. IT CAN BE ASSUMED THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER ELECTIONS IN ISRAEL, POLITICAL SEASON IN MIDDLE EAST WILL REOPEN. WHAT WAS NEW IN NIXON'S STATEMENT WAS THAT HE MADE IT EASIER FOR KISSINGER TO DEAL WITH MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM BY PUBLIC DECLARATION THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO GIVE IT HIGHEST PRIORITY.

5. BARNEA (DAVAR) WRITES THAT PRESIDENT DID NOT DEMAND FROM ISRAEL CHANGES IN ITS POLICY AND EMPHASIZED IN WORDS WHICH SOUND REASONABLE TO ISRAELIS THAT US IS INTERESTED IN ADVANCING NEGOTIATIONS. BUT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO HEAR IN HIS STATEMENT OTHER TUNES. HE DID NOT DETACH OIL PROBLEM FROM ISRAEL-ARAB DISPUTE. ON CONTRARY, OIL PROBLEM STRENGTHENS HIS WISH TO PUT MIDDLE EAST AT TOP OF KISSINGER'S PRIORITY LIST.

6. DAVAR EDITORIAL: ISRAEL CAN DRAW ENCOURAGEMENT FROM RENEWED ASSURANCE THAT US WILL NOT DECIDE ITS POLICY ON ISRAEL ACCORDING TO WHAT HAPPENS ABOUT ARAB OIL. ON OTHER HAND, REFERENCE TO BOTH PARTIES' GUILT IN MATTER OF DEADLOCK AND WARNING THAT INSISTING ON STATUS QUO WILL NOT BENEFIT EITHER, SHOW THAT COFFEEBREAK IN US EFFORT TO PROMOTE A SOLUTION IS COMING TO AN END.

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7. AL HAMISHMAR WRITES THAT NIXON'S WARNING AGAINST USE OF OIL AS WEAPON IS TOKEN OF FAR-SIGHTED POLICY, BUT ISRAEL WOULD BE WRONG TO DISREGARD OTHER NEW NOTE: BLAME ASSIGNED AND WARNING ADDRESSED TO BOTH PARTIES. REDUCING PRESSURE OF UNSOLVED ISRAELI-ARAB DISPUTE, NIXON SAID, WILL HELP EASE OIL PROBLEM. IT IS SIGNIFICANT STATEMENT, INDICATING THAT US IS GETTING IMPATIENT WITH STATUS QUO AND

IS ABOUT TO TAKE NEW INITIATIVES IN MIDDLE EAST.

8. HAARETZ WRITES EDITORIALY THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAS MADE SOME REMARKS ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY OF BOTH SIDES FOR MIDDLE EAST DEADLOCK AND ABOUT BOTH SIDES' NEED TO PROGRESS TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH MAY NOT BE TO TASTE OF SOME OF ISRAEL'S STATESMEN. NIXON ADMITS THAT FROM ARAB VIEWPOINT, OIL AND MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM ARE LINKED, AND EVEN IF THAT IS NO MORE THAN SISCO HAS SAID SEVERAL TIMES, COMING FROM PRESIDENT IT CARRIES MORE WEIGHT. SOONER OR LATER AFTER THE ELECTIONS ONE MUST EXPECT A US INITIATIVE, CONTRADICTING ASSUMPTION THAT ISRAEL HAS FREE HAND IN PLANNING ITS POLICY IN TERRITORIES UNTIL 1977. HASTY POLICY OF CREATING FACTS IN TERRITORIES MAY TURN OUT TO BE TWO-EDGED SWORD.  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
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**To:** STATE  
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